Copy

A. A. Phelps to S. J. May.
Nov. 15. 1837.

Boston Nov 15. 1837

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PHELPS MSS.

Dear Brother.

I am anxious to get at the exact position of the ministry of all denominations, in this state, on the subject of slavery. My reasons are, that the information will be valuable on several accounts, but particularly that I wish to show by facts, if the facts will show it, as I believe they will, that more of the ministry, in proportion to their whole number are abolitionists than of the laity - in other words, that the ministry are in advance of the people on this subject. I deem it, for reasons which I cannot now detail, all important to establish this point at the present time. Particularly do I wish the information in question before the annual meeting of our state society in January next. Will you then, obtain & furnish me, as soon as the first of January, full & accurate information & on the following points, in respect to all the ministers of your denomination, belonging to, or within the limits of your association?

1. Their number, names, & post office address.

2. Who of them are members of anti-slavery societies formed on the principles of immediate emancipation.

3 Who, if not members of societies, do yet fully & heartily adopt the principles of immediate emancipation without expatriation, as set forth in the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

4 Why those who thus adopt our principles & yet are not members of any society, are so.

5 Who, whether members of societies or not, have preached, made speeches, or labored in other ways for the promotion

of the cause of immediate emancipation.

6. If any who thus adopt our principles, have not hitherto acted as efficiently in their profession, as they could have wished what have been the obstacles in the way.

Believe me dear brother, these questions are asked not only from a desire to get at the real facts in the case, but from a firm belief also, that the facts will be honorable to the ministry, fully sustain the position suggested on the other page, & aid effectually in promoting the cause of the slave, & exert a salutary influence in regard to religion & its institutions generally. Particularly do I desire full & accurate information in respect to the first four inquiries, & the sooner I have it, provided it be complete, the better. Do spare no pains, let me entreat you, to get this information for me. Let me hear from you soon, & believe me, yours truly, for the slave —

A. A. Phelps

Brother May

In addition to a reply to the written inquiries, please send me a list of your associations, with the name of the members, & the name of one or more of the best working abolitionists in each, underscored, that I may know who to address when I wish to get things done; & much oblige

Yours truly, for the slave.

A. A. Phelps.